

Color Coding the Elements of an Argumentative Essay

INTRODUCTION

In the introduction (the first paragraph) mark the text in the following ways:

1. **On the left of the first line**, write the type of **lead (a.k.a. hook or grabber)**. If there is not interesting lead, draw a frowny face 😞 on the left of the first line. **Lead methods...** →
2. Draw a squiggly line under the **thesis/claim** (in yellow). It may be the last sentence of the first paragraph.
3. Number the **3 (or more) reasons** stated in the thesis/claim (in red) and **circle** the commas that separate them.

Lead or Hook Methods

- Open with a quote.
- Open with a question.
- Open with a strong statement.
- Open with a description.
- Open with a simile or metaphor.
- Open with an unusual detail or statistic.

Red Reason Transitions

- first, next, last
- one reason, another reason, the last reason
- first, second, third,
- one, additionally, lastly

REASON 1 PARAGRAPH

You will mark each of the “red reason” paragraphs in the same way.

1. **Circle the transition** at the beginning of the paragraph (in red).
2. **Underline the reason** (in red).
3. **Number the supporting details** for that reason and write what **type of evidence** is being used for each supporting detail (in red).

REASON 2 PARAGRAPH

Mark this “red reason” paragraph in the same way as the last paragraph.

1. **Circle the transition** at the beginning of the paragraph (in red).
2. **Underline the reason** (in red).
3. **Number the supporting details** for that reason and write what **type of evidence** is being used for each supporting detail (in red).

Types of Evidence

- facts
- examples
- data
- expert opinions
- anecdotes (stories)

REASON 3 PARAGRAPH

Again, mark this “red reason” paragraph the same way as the other reason paragraphs.

1. **Circle the transition** at the beginning of the paragraph (in red).
2. **Underline the reason** (in red).
3. **Number the supporting details** for that reason and write what **type of evidence** is being used for each supporting detail (in red).

Blue Rebuttal Transitions

- However,
- On the contrary,
- Nevertheless,
- On the other hand,

REBUTTAL PARAGRAPH

1. Underline the other side's argument (in blue).
2. Circle the transition that leads into the rebuttal argument (in blue).
3. **Number the supporting details** for that reason and write what **type of support** is being used (in blue).

Conclusion Transitions

- As you can see,
- Clearly,
- In summary,
- All in all,
- In conclusion,

CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH

1. Circle the conclusion transition (in green).
2. **Draw a squiggly line** under the restated **thesis/claim** (in yellow).
3. Number the **3 (or more) restated reasons** listed in the claim (in red).
4. **On the left of the last line**, write the type of **tackle** used. If there is no tackle, draw a frowny face to the left of the last line. 😞

Tackle methods...

Tackle Methods

- End with a quote.
- End with a call to action.
- End with a pointed question.
- End with an anecdote.
- End with a prediction.
- End with a strong statement about why it matters.

WORD CHOICE

Reread the essay and find seven "boring" words that are overused and not very descriptive. Put a square around each of the boring words and write them in boxes like the ones below. Then, look up each of the words in the thesaurus and find a new, more interesting word to replace it. Write the replacement above the boring word in the essay and in the replacement boxes below.

BORING WORDS

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REPLACEMENT WORDS

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Now, read through the essay and circle words that are overused (two or more times in a paragraph). To eliminate repetition, replace some of those words with synonyms, as well. Write the replacement words above the circled words.